

Historic Streetcar Systems of Colorado



COLORADO
Department of Transportation

Prepared by:

AECOM

**Mead
& Hunt** | EXPERIENCE EXCEPTIONAL

ARCH
PROFESSIONALS

Purpose/ Project Objectives



- Streamline Section 106 review process
- Establish a better understanding of streetcar systems in the state
- Develop historic context for streetcar systems in communities across Colorado
- Identify locations of historic streetcar systems and present in GIS-based mapping system
- Establish NRHP evaluation framework

Study Scope

Known Communities with Streetcar Systems

- Aspen
- Boulder
- Colorado Springs
- Cripple Creek/ Victor
- Denver
- Durango
- Englewood
- Fort Collins
- Grand Junction
- Greeley
- Leadville
- Littleton
- Manitou Springs
- Pueblo
- Trinidad
- Interurban Lines



Research Design and Methodology

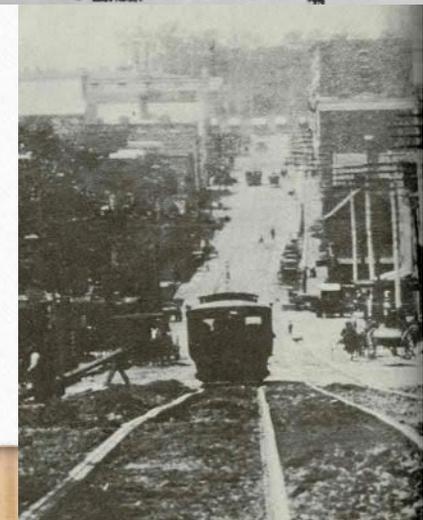
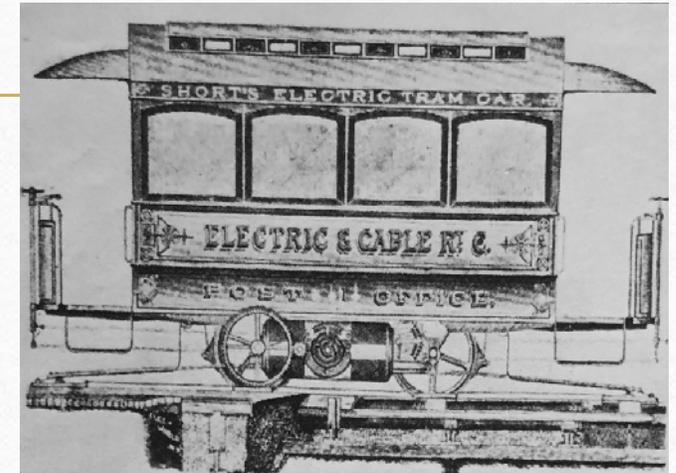
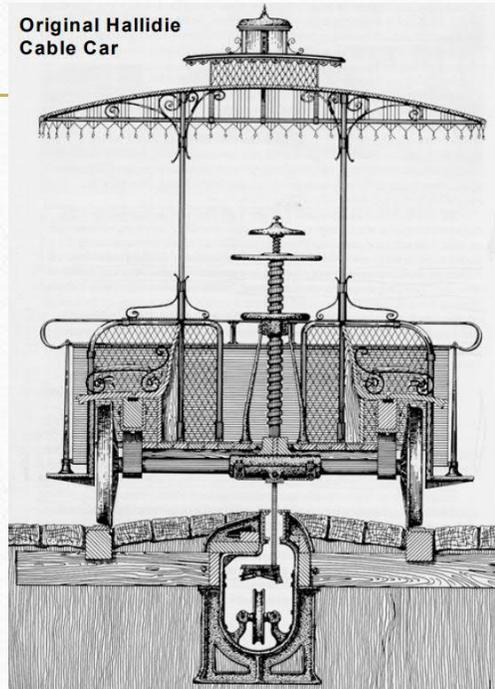
Research Focused on Key Research Questions:

- Research Focused on 5 Key research questions
 - Establishment
 - Operations
 - Technology
 - Changes
 - Termination

- Literature Search
 - Primary and Secondary Sources
 - Local and State Archives
- Development of GIS Database/ Fields
 - Completed concurrently with Research/ Helped Inform Research

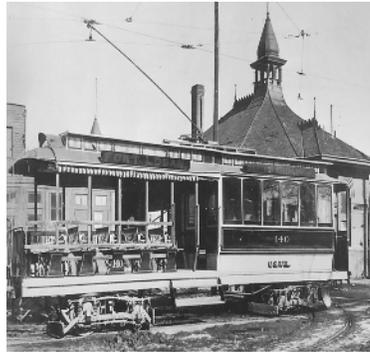
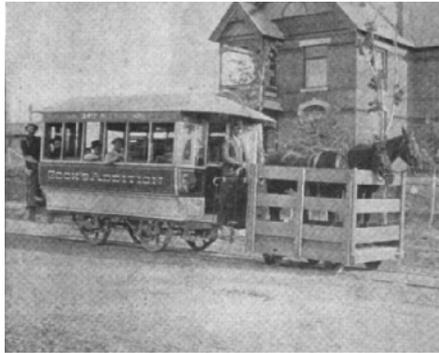
National Streetcar Context

- Horsecars
- Omnibuses
- Steam Dummies
- Cable Car
- Electric
- Became part of everyday Life
 - Several attempts
 - Sprague Overhead Electric- Richmond, VA in 1887-1888
- Decline of Streetcars: Popularity/ availability of automobiles, electric trolley buses, buses. Most streetcars gone by 1950s.



Streetcars in Colorado

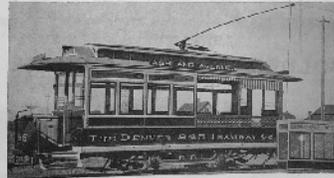
- Horsecars (1871- ca. 1900)
- Cable Cars, Denver Only (1888-1900)
- Electric Technology:
 - Denver- 1889 (2 years after Richmond)
 - WWII gave new life- Denver ending in 1950 and Fort Collins ending in 1952
- Motives:
 - Public Transport, Civic Pride, Real Estate Development, Recreation/ Tourism, Industrial/ Commercial, Education
- Ownership often by local well-respected residents
- Specific routes occasionally funded by residents
- No municipal-started lines
- Rarely municipally run
- Most started as for-profit endeavors



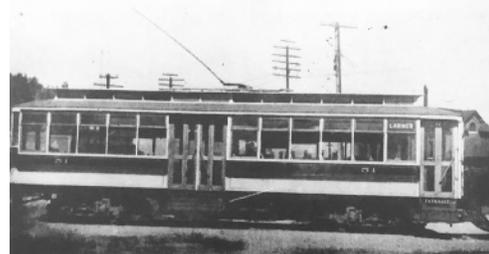
WOEBER BROS. CARRIAGE CO.
DENVER, COLO.,



BUILDERS OF
STREET RAILWAY CARS.



FOR EITHER ELECTRIC OR CABLE SERVICE
Which are Specially Adapted to Dry Climates
and High Altitudes.



Uniquely Colorado

- Weather
- Silver Panic of 1893
- Minority ownership/ operation of streetcars



Interurbans/ The End of Colorado's Streetcars



INTERURBANS

- In CO, built between 1901-1908
- Connected Denver with Golden, Arvada, Lakewood and Boulder
- Connected Grand Junction with Fruita
- Connected Cripple Creek District
- Many plans for larger network connecting the Front Range, but never came to Fruition

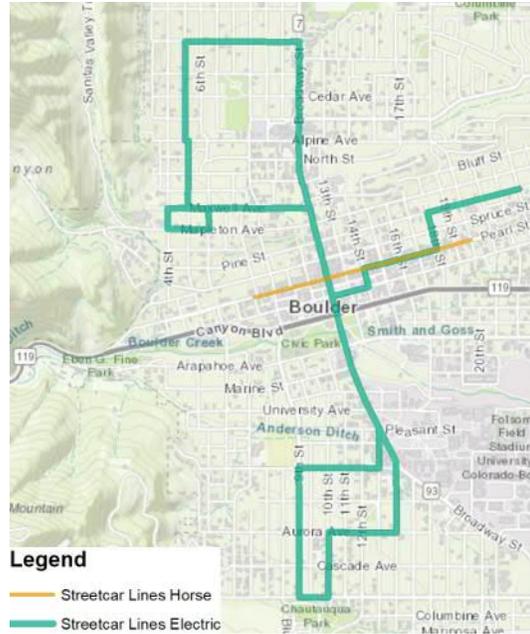
THE END

- Automobile High Country Tourism
- Highways improved
- Great Depression
- World War II- Many again depended on streetcars
- Post-War- Automobile use increased, cheaper and more flexible to use trolley coach or bus

Aspen

- Aspen City Railway: (1889-1893) Horsecar

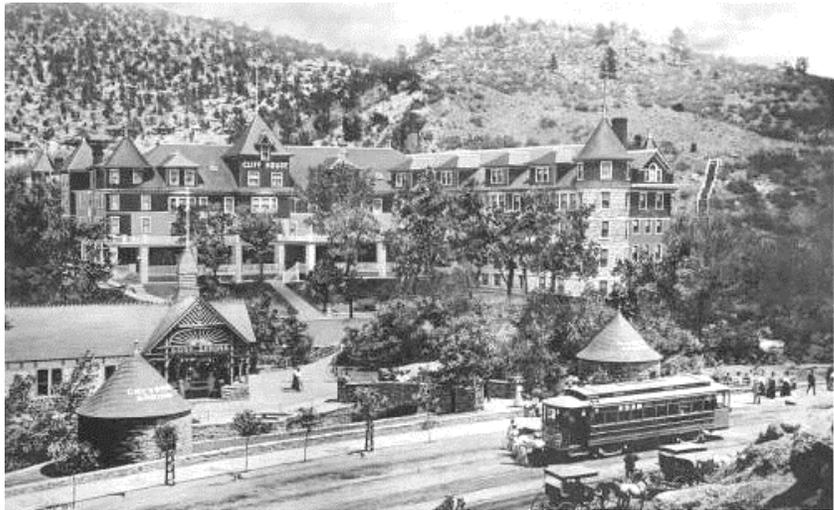




East side of 12th from Bridge to Arapahoe. Before paving there was a horse track from morning to the bridge.

Boulder

- Boulder Railway and Improvement Company (1891-1892) Horsecar
- Boulder Railway and Utility Company (1899-1902) Electric
- Boulder Electric Light Company (1902-1906) Electric
- Northern Colorado Power Company (1906-1914) Electric
- Western Light and Power Company (1914-1922) Electric
- Public Service Company of Colorado (1922-1931) Electric

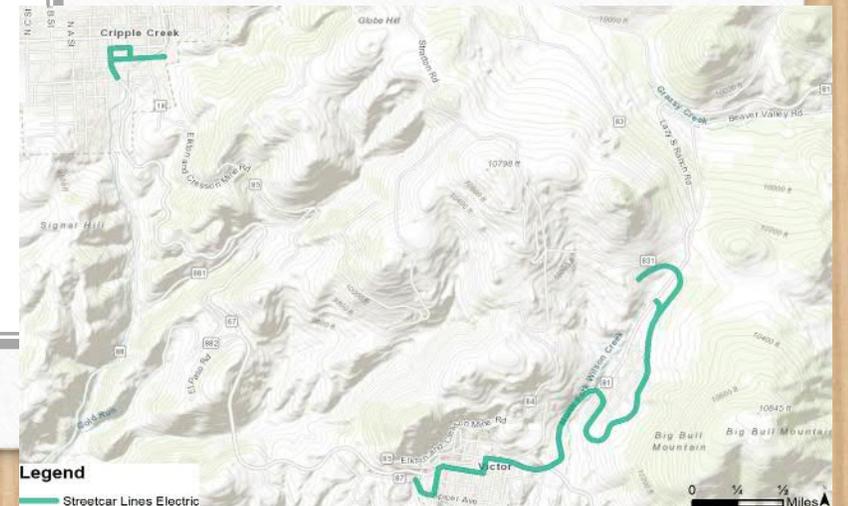
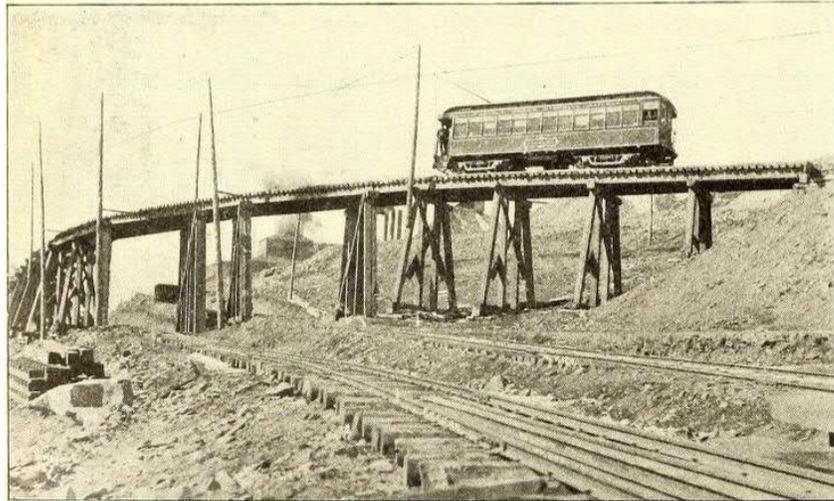
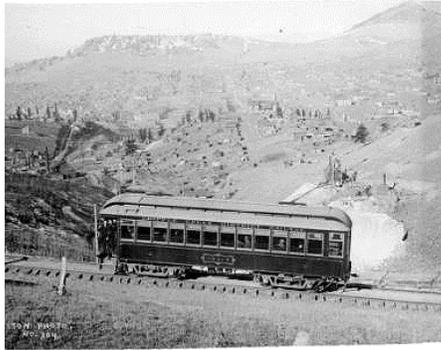


Colorado Springs

- Colorado Springs & Manitou Street Railway Company (1887-1890) Horsecar
- Colorado Springs Rapid Transit Company (1890-1902) Electric
- Manitou Electric Railway and Casino Company (1893-1895) Electric
- Colorado Springs & Interurban Railway Company (1902-1932) Electric

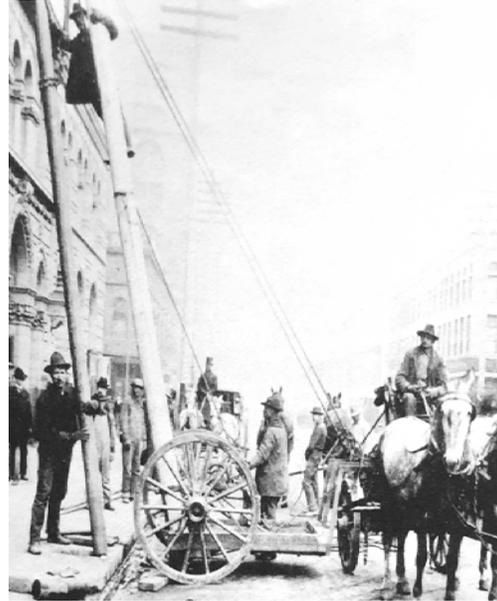
Cripple Creek

- Cripple Creek District Railway (1897-1899) Electric
- Colorado Springs & Cripple Creek District Railway (1899-1923) Electric

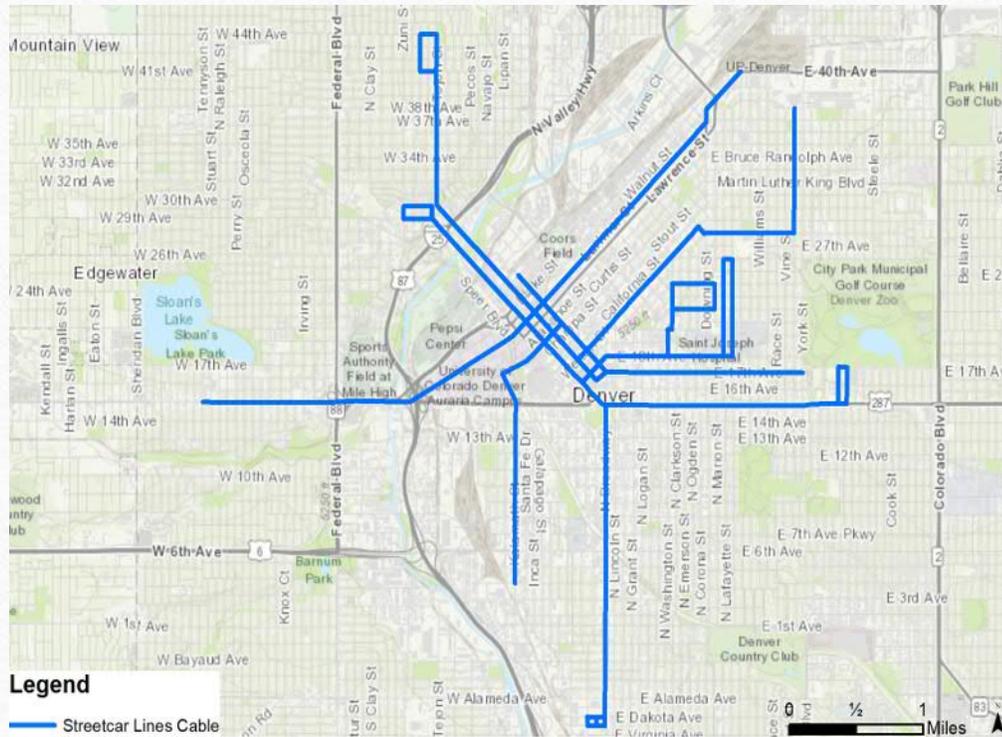


Denver

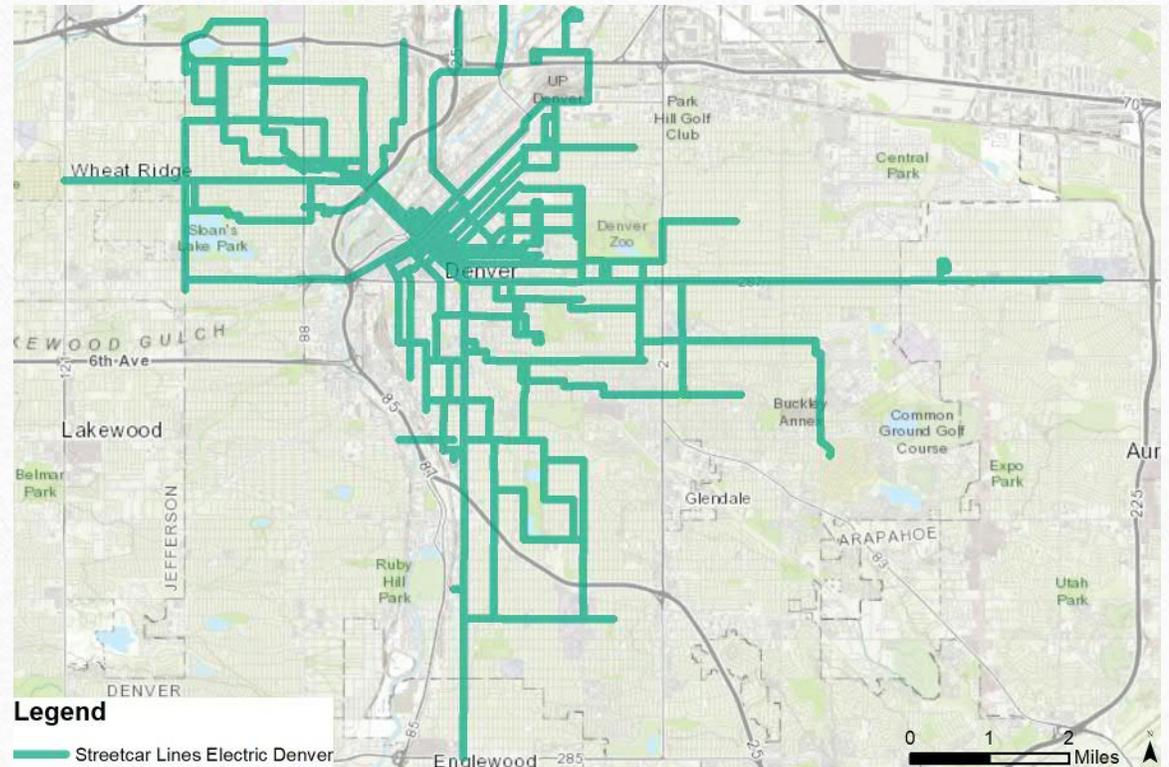
- 1st horsecar in 1871
- Major competition between companies
- Horsecar, Steam Dummy, Gravity Horsecar, Cable Car, Electric
- As technology evolved, old routes often converted to electric, some abandoned
- Eventually The Denver Tramway controlled all streetcar operations in Denver



Denver

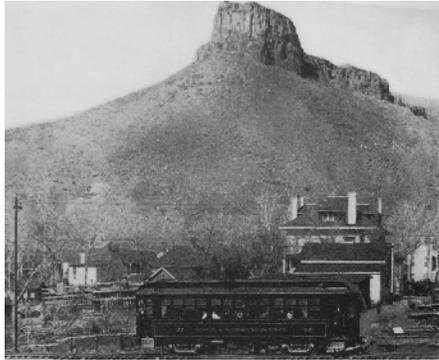


Cable Car Lines in Denver



Electric Car Lines in Denver

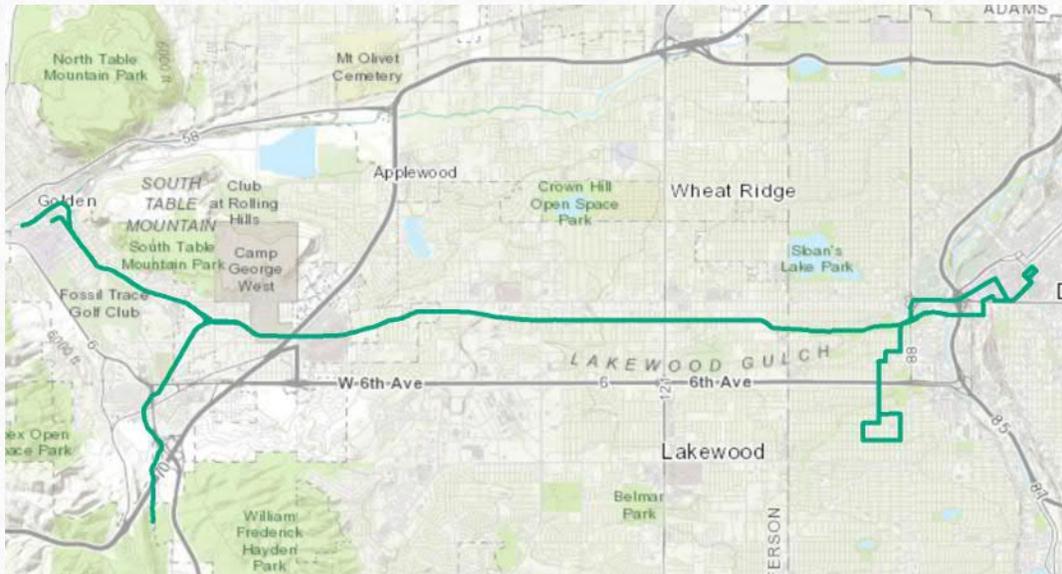
Denver Interurbans



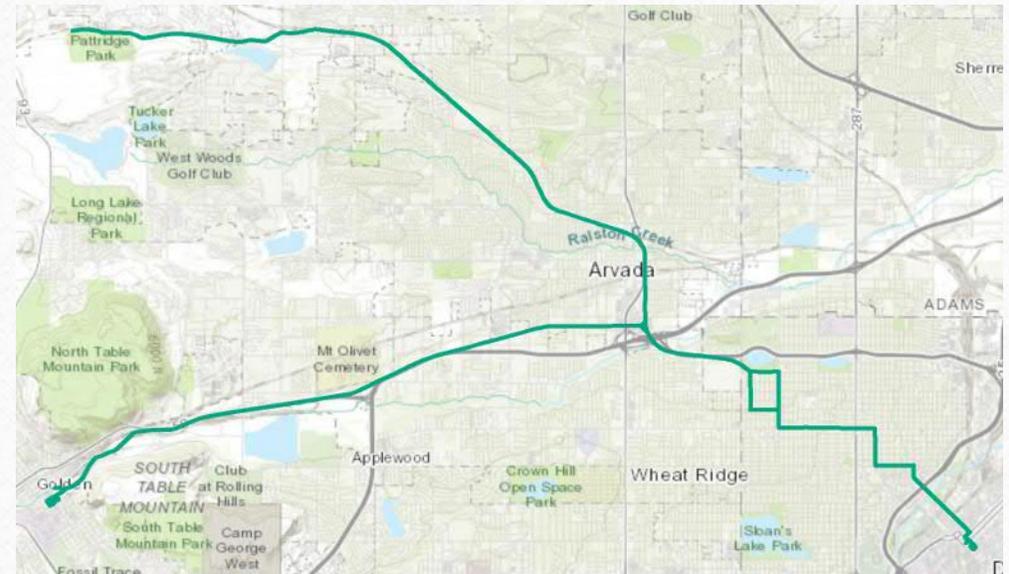
- Denver, Lakewood & Golden/ Denver and Inter-Mountain Railroad (1890-1953)
 - Denver to Golden via Lakewood
- Denver & Northwestern Railway (1901-1950)
 - Denver to Golden via Leyden and Arvada
- Denver & Interurban Railroad (1904-1926)
 - Denver to Boulder

Denver Interurbans

Map of the Denver, Lakewood & Golden Line



Map of Denver & Northwestern Line



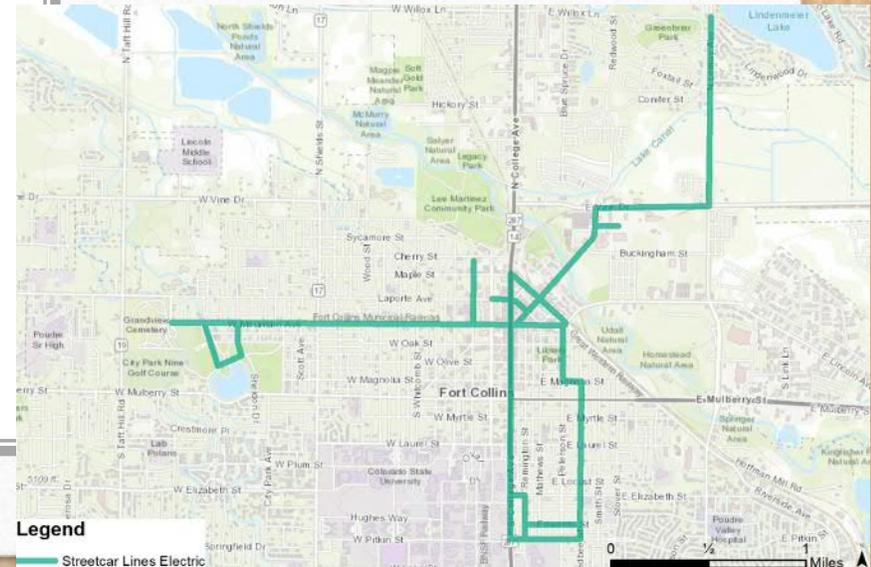
Englewood

- Cherrelyn Gravity & Bronco Railroad (ca. 1892-1910) Horsecar
- Loretto Heights Railway Company/ Fort Logan Street Railway (1898-1901) Horsecar



Fort Collins

- Denver & Interurban Railroad Company (1906-1918) Electric
- Fort Collins Municipal Railway (1918-1952) Electric

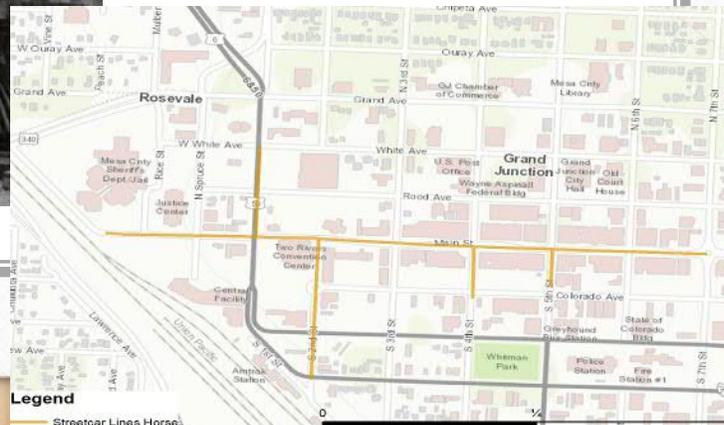


Grand Junction

- Grand Junction Street Car Company (1890-1891) Horsecar
- Grand Junction Street Railway Co. (1891-c.1901) Horsecar
- City of Grand Junction (1901-1903) Horsecar
- Grand Junction & Grand River Valley Railway Company (1909-1914) Electric

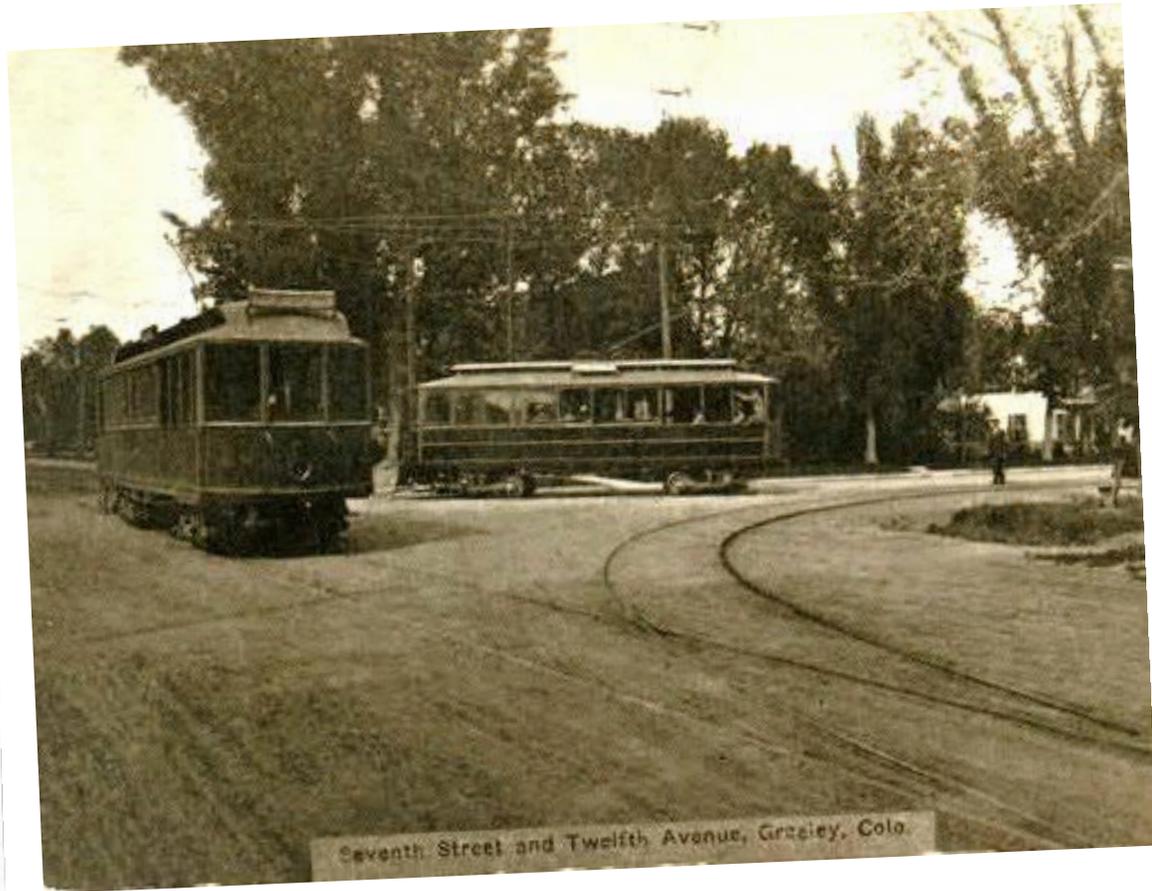
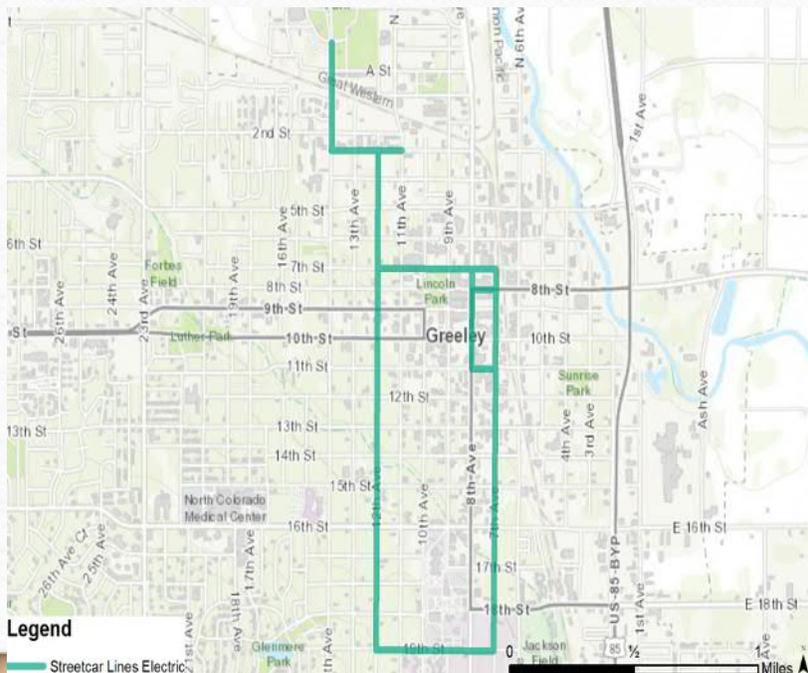
Grand River Valley Railway Company (1914-1926) Electric

Grand River Valley Railroad (1926-1935) Electric



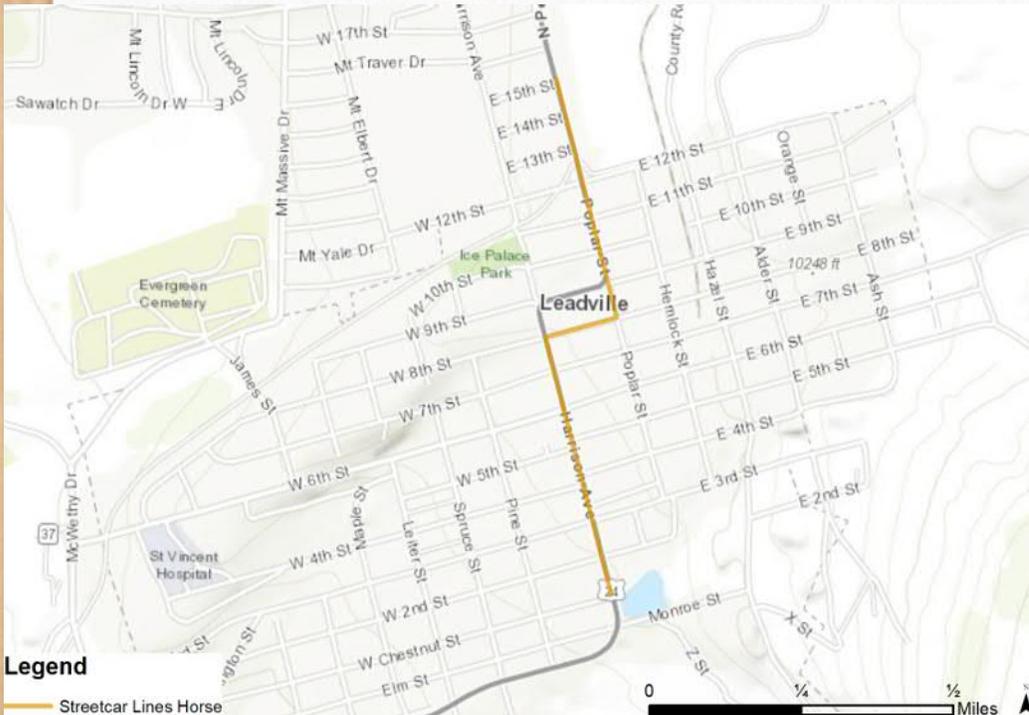
Greeley

- Greeley & Denver Railroad (1910-1922) Electric



Leadville

* Leadville Street Railroad Company
(1881-1882) Horsecar

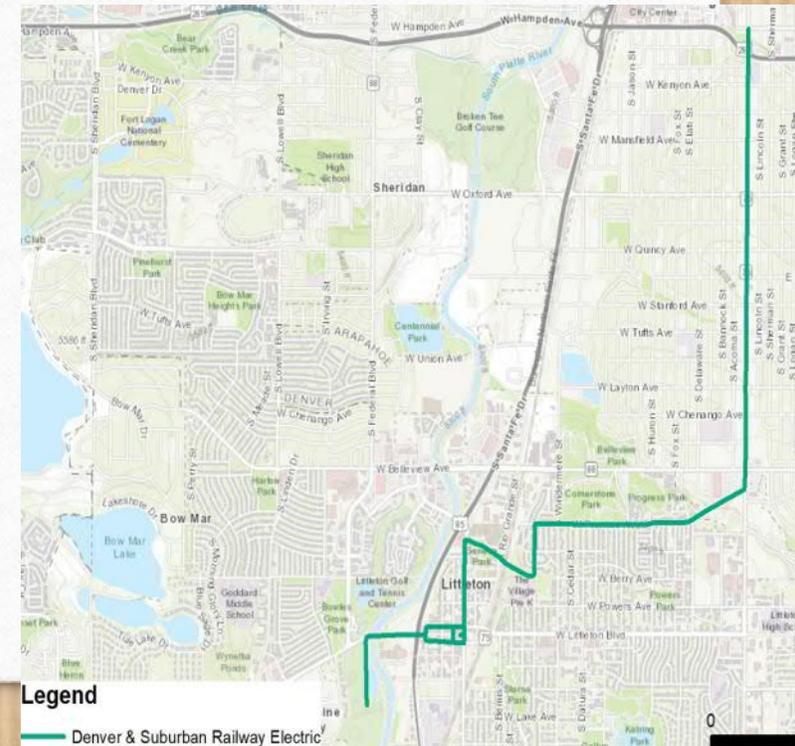




Images from the Collection of the Littleton Museum.

Littleton

* Denver & South Platte
Railway (1907-1926)
Electric



Legend

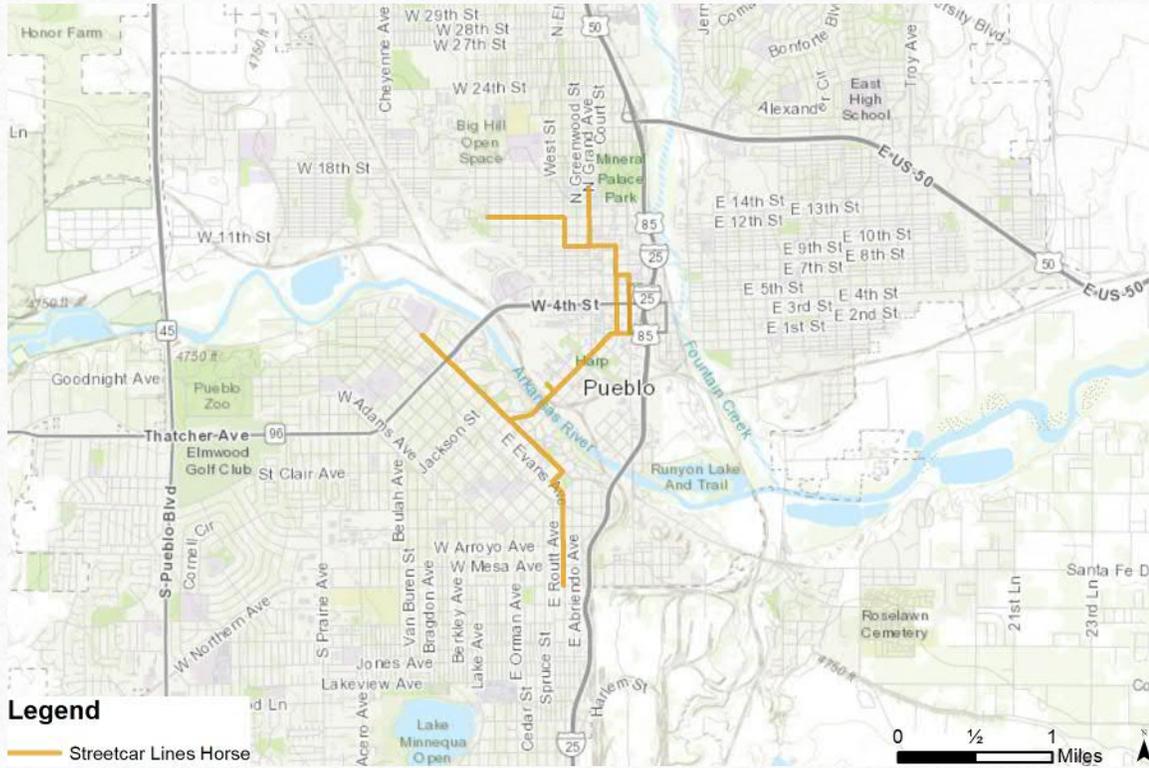
— Denver & Suburban Railway Electric



Pueblo

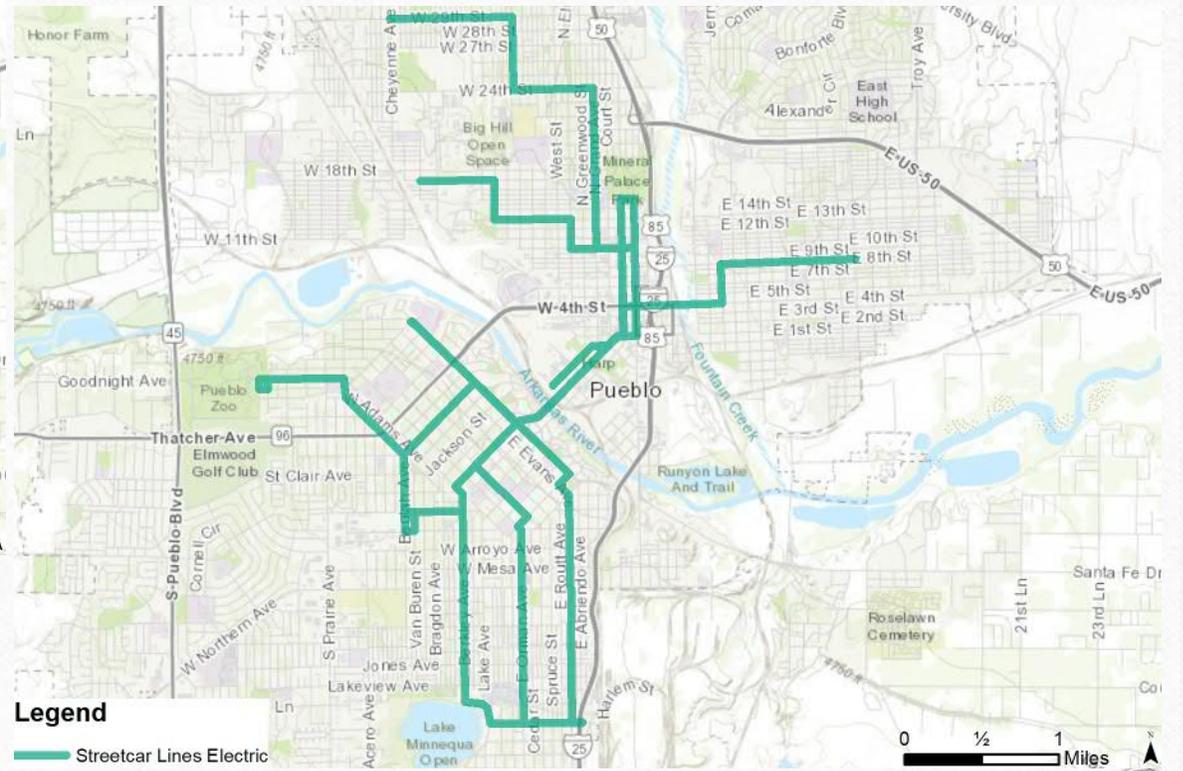
- Pueblo Street Railroad (1878-1889) Horsecar
- Pueblo City Railway Company (1889-1895) Electric
- Pueblo Electric Street Railway (1895-1899) Electric
- Pueblo Suburban Traction & Lighting Company (1899-1911) Electric
- Arkansas Valley Railway, Light & Power Company (1911-1921) Electric
- Southern Colorado Power Company (1921-1947) Electric

Pueblo



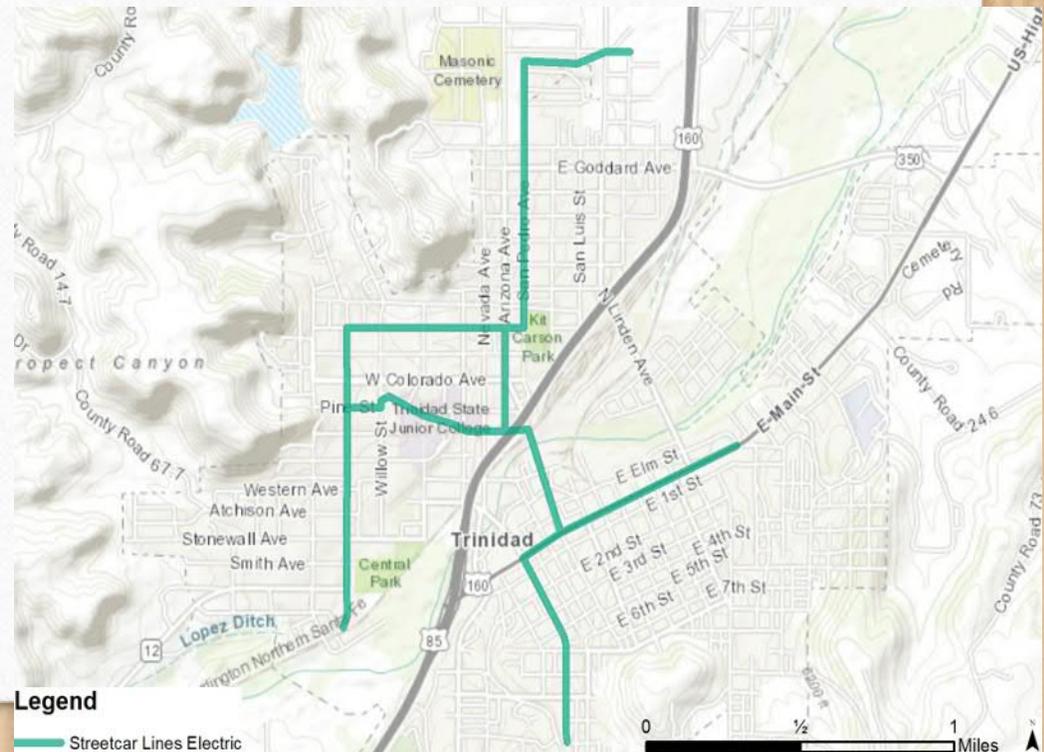
Horse Car

Electric



Trinidad

- Trinidad Street Railway (1882-c. 1892) Horse
- Trinidad Electric Railway Company (1903-1923) Electric



Registration Requirements/ Integrity

- Determining Boundaries
- Determining Significance
- Level of Significance
- Period of Significance
- Retention of Character-Defining Features
- Assessing Integrity
 - Location
 - Setting
 - Design
 - Materials
 - Workmanship
 - Feeling
 - Association



Have a project that might impact a streetcar line? Want to learn more about streetcar systems in your community? Follow this checklist to guide your research!

Streetcar Research Checklist

Background Information

- Consult Streetcar GIS tool, the Colorado Historic Streetcar Viewer, to identify company, mode of transport, years of operation, extent of line
- Consult OAHP COMPASS database
- Review current aerial maps
- Review historic context from this report, *Historic Streetcar Systems of Colorado*

Detailed Historical Research

- Consult the Bibliography of this report
- Complete Historic Map Research
 - Streetcar Company and/or Railroad Maps
 - Local Maps
 - Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Maps
 - USGS Maps
 - Maps in secondary sources
- Consult Historic Aerial Photography
- Visit Local Archives/ Libraries
 - Secondary Sources
 - Streetcar Company Collections
 - Newspaper Clippings
 - Oral Histories
- Contact Local Government Offices (Public Works, Preservation)
- Consult Period Journals (Street Railway Journal, Electric Railway Journal)

Future Research and Contexts

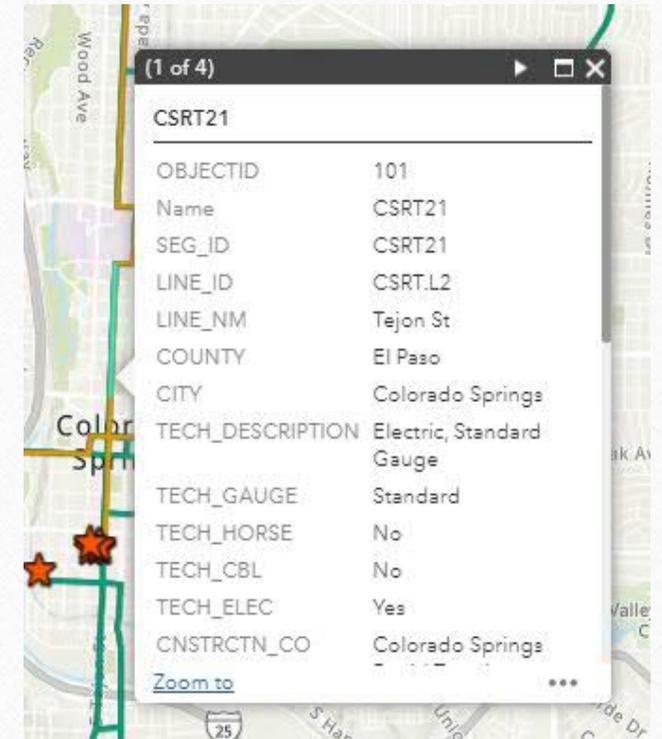
- Underrepresented and minority group ownership and participation in streetcar systems
- Contexts related to streetcar suburbs and streetcar commercial districts
- Rolling stock
- Updating of Colorado Historic Streetcar Viewer



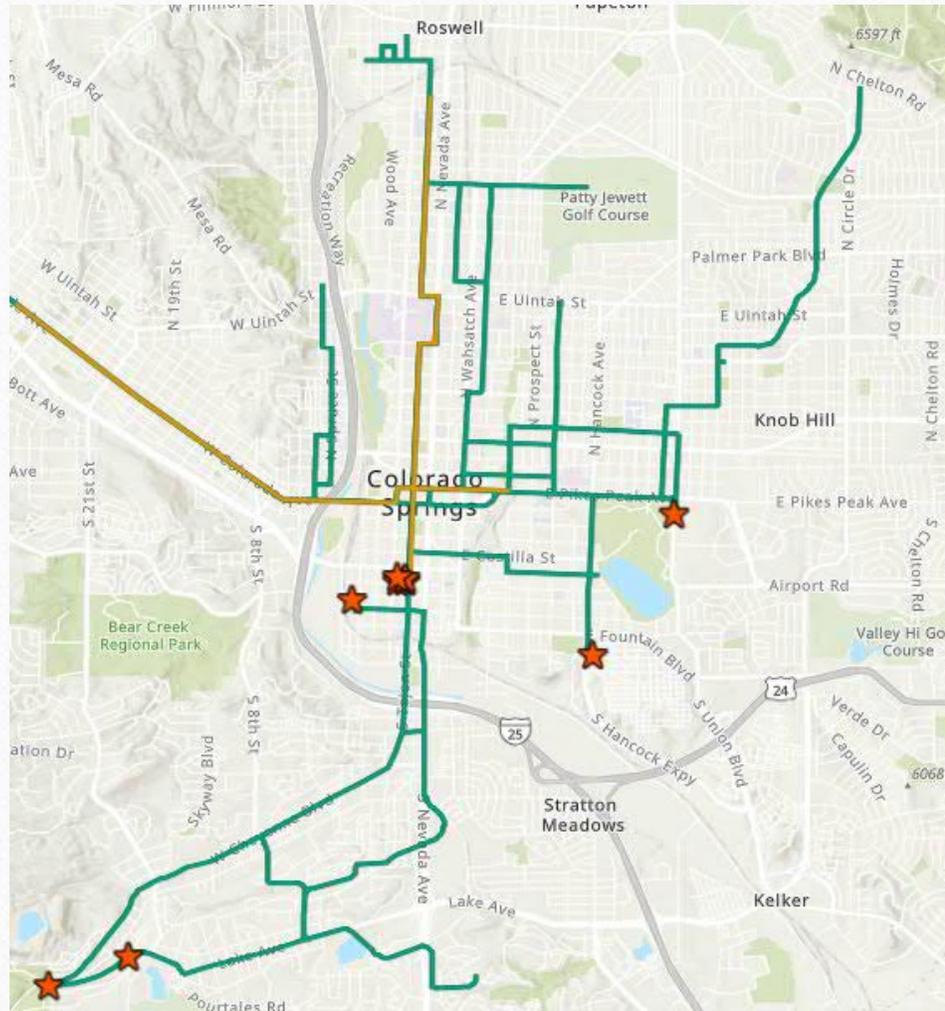
ESRI ARCGIS Geodatabase

- Locations not field verified
- Road centerlines used for approximate locations
- Streetcar routes documented as line
- Associated resources found during research identified on maps

- Attributes
 - Technology
 - Gauge
 - Construction Company
 - Construction Date
 - Operating Companies
 - Operations Start
 - Operations End
 - Property Type
 - Historic Significance
 - Existing Condition
 - Data Source
 - COMPASS Number



Mapping by Streetcar Technology



Legend

Historic Streetcar - Resources



Historic Streetcar - Streetcar_Lines_Cable



Historic Streetcar - Streetcar_Lines_Horse



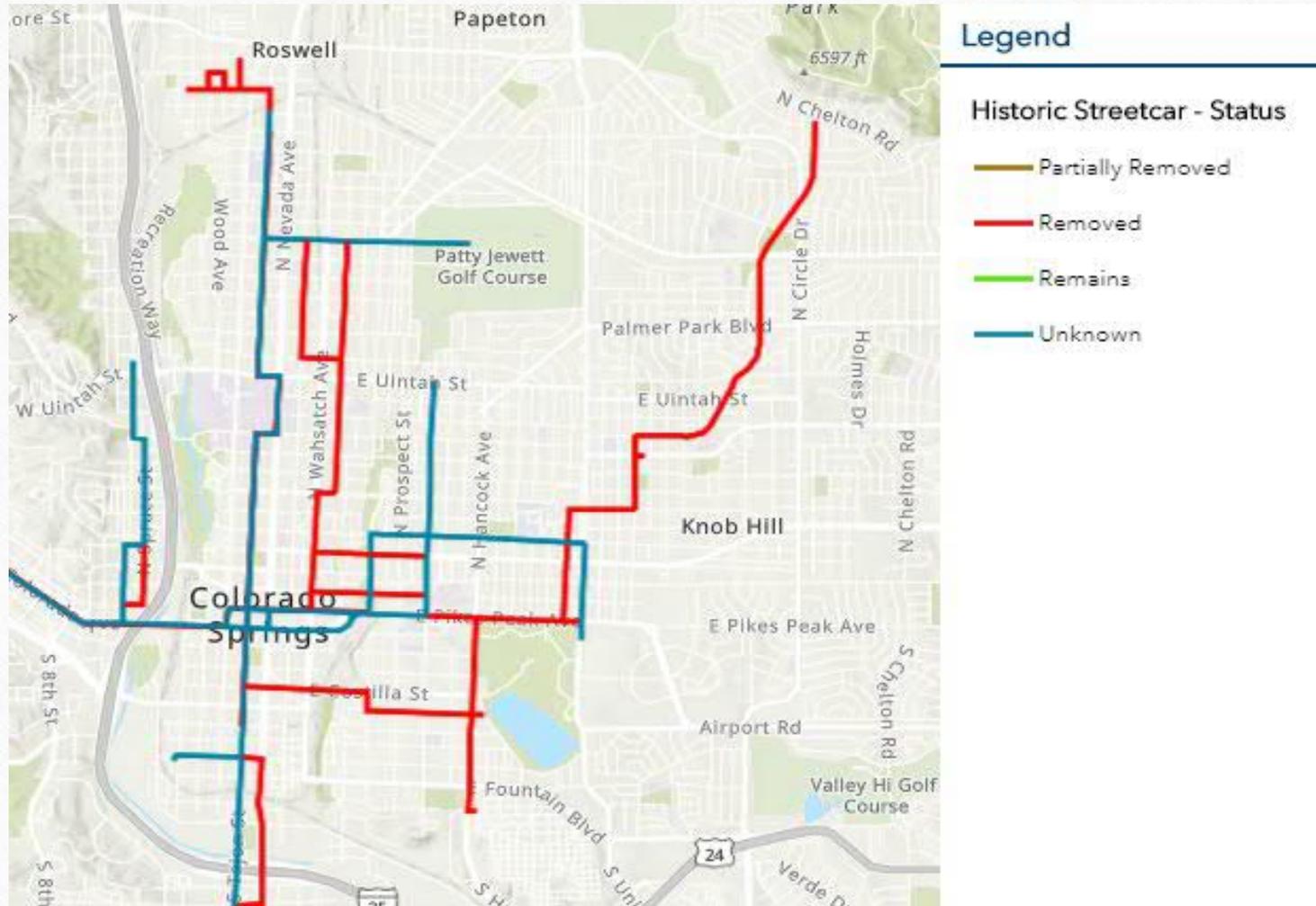
Historic Streetcar - Streetcar_Lines_Electric



Historic Streetcar - Streetcar_Technology_Unknown_or_TBD



Mapping by Status



Mapping by Year of Operation

Legend

Historic Streetcars Time Lapse_WFL1 - Resources



Historic Streetcars Time Lapse_WFL1 - Streetcar_Lines_Cable



Historic Streetcars Time Lapse_WFL1 - Streetcar_Lines_Horse



Historic Streetcars Time Lapse_WFL1 - Streetcar_Lines_Electric



Historic Streetcars Time Lapse_WFL1 - Streetcar_Technology_Unknown_or_TBD



Historic Streetcars Time Lapse_WFL1 - Status

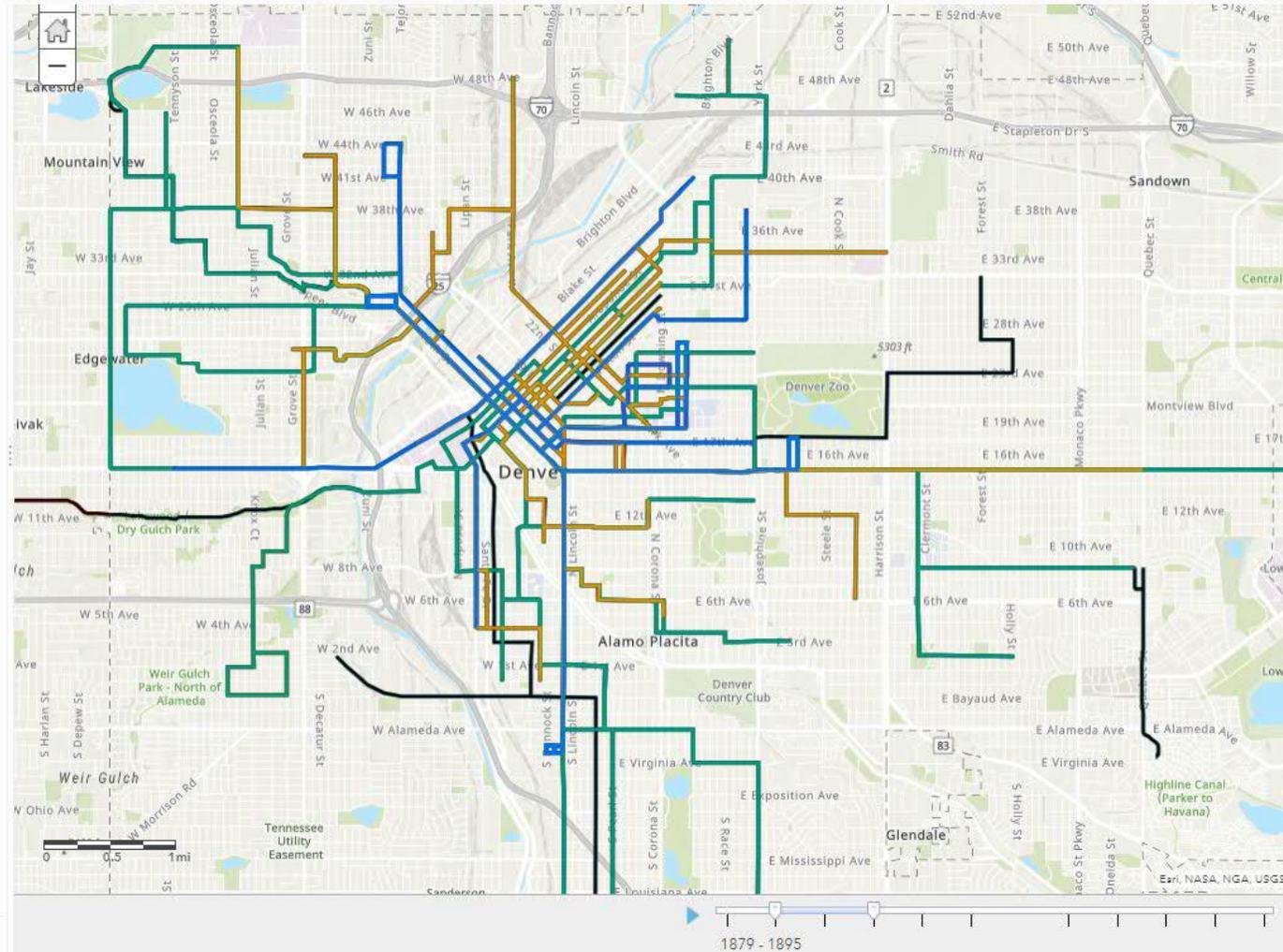
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Remains

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Questions and Discussion

Historic Streetcar Systems of Colorado

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Ethan Raath, Ethan.Raath@meadhunt.com

GIS Application Link: <https://arcg.is/1Da94j>

Report Link: <https://www.codot.gov/programs/research/pdfs/2020-research-reports/cdot-2020-11.pdf>